18th Annual Freelance Workshop

Expanding Your Freelance Toolbox: Learn Today, Use Tomorrow

Extraordinary Useable Tips and Networking for Seasoned, New, and Aspiring Freelance Medical Writers

Saturday, March 14, 2020
8:00 AM–4:45 PM

DoubleTree Suites
by Hilton Hotel Philadelphia West
640 Fountain Road,
Plymouth Meeting, PA, 19462
Workshop Program

8:00 AM–8:40 AM: Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:40 AM Welcome and Introductions

8:45 AM – 9:40 AM. “Five Habits of Successful Freelancers” Lori De Milto

9:45 AM – 10:40 AM. “Transform Your Marketing From Bland to BAM!” Brian Bass

10:40 AM – 10:55 AM Break

11:00 AM – 11:55 AM. "Fact Checking and Annotating for Medical-Legal Review” Melissa Bogen

12:00 PM–1:25 PM Networking Lunch

1:30 – 2:25 PM Roundtable Session A

2:30 PM – 2:45 PM: Break

2:50 PM – 3:45 PM: Roundtable Session B

3:50 PM – 4:45 PM Concurrent Interactive Panel Discussions

- Jam Session for Seasoned Freelancers – Moderated by Brian Bass
- OR
- How Medical Communication Companies Choose Their Freelance or Contract Medical Writers (featuring representatives from local Med Education Companies that hire freelancers) – Moderated by Kathy Molnar-Kimber

Special Features
Friday night AMWA-DVC networking dinner: We are organizing a group dinner at a local restaurant for people who are staying at the hotel (or live nearby). Each person will pay for his/her own dinner. See page 8 for details.

Hotel rooms: Room are available at the DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Hotel Philadelphia West. Please contact the hotel for room rates. See page 8 for details.
Morning Presentations

Five Habits of Successful Freelancers. 8:45 AM – 9:40 AM.
Lori De Milto, Freelance writer and founder, The Mighty Marketer

The decisions we make and the actions we take every day—our habits—can lead to freelance success or freelance struggle. Successful freelance medical writers and/or editors build and stick to these 5 habits: 1. Confidence 2. Excellence 3. Marketing 4. Management and 5. Grit. Learn how these 5 habits contribute to freelance success and a simple way to build and stick to habits. The process includes starting small, increasing the new habit gradually and consistently, getting back on track when you slip, and being patient and persistent.

Transform Your Marketing From Bland to BAM! 9:45 AM – 10:40 AM
Brian G. Bass, MWC®, President Bass Global Inc.

Most medical communicators are introverts. They fear marketing, thinking it's an extrovert's game, but it’s not. It's also not a passive activity. In this presentation you’ll learn the difference between passive and active marketing, and how you can transform bland marketing into BAM! marketing by making simple adjustments to some of the things you do every day.

Fact Checking and Annotating for Medical-Legal Review. 11:00 AM – 11:55 AM
Melissa L. Bogen, ELS

In this presentation, Melissa will explain what's entailed in fact checking and annotating/highlighting references for medical-legal review. Bring your laptop so you can practice creating a reference PDF binder, which combines all the reference PDFs into 1 document.

Learning objectives: By the end of the presentation, the audience will be more able to:
- Describe how to ensure accuracy of claims in a document
- Annotate claims in a document
- Highlight and annotate reference PDFs to support the claims
- Prepare a reference binder for submission to Veeva Vault or similar systems

Roundtables
1:30 – 2:25 PM Roundtable Session A
2:50 PM – 3:45 PM: Roundtable Session B

The AMWA-DVC Freelance Workshop will offer 2 sessions of duplicate roundtables. Choose 2 roundtables on the registration form: one for the first Roundtable Session A and one for the second Roundtable Session B.
1. **Key Takeaways from EFA Conference 2019: Focus on Marketing and Time-Saving Tools (Laura Ninger)**
   The 2019 Conference of the Editorial Freelancers Association was held in Chicago last August. The meeting featured several presentations on marketing and time-saving strategies that offered both useful information and quotable pearls of wisdom from the presenters, each of whom will be acknowledged. In this roundtable, attendees will learn to implement business practices underlying these concepts:
   - Eradicate the notion of business "famine" with client-centered marketing
   - Raise your rates no matter what, with creative pricing strategies
   - Try new technologies with 4 electronic editing programs
   - Use administrative tools and templates to cope with email and administrative backlog

2. **From Benchtop to Desktop: How to Effectively Transition from a Scientist to a Medical Writer (Ruwaida Vakil)**
   At this roundtable session, we will discuss opportunities for scientists in medical writing. The discussion will focus on how to:
   - Determine whether medical writing is right for you
   - Translate skills and experiences learned as a scientist into medical writing
   - Develop a portfolio of writing samples

   Participants will be encouraged to share their experiences with transitioning into medical writing. Participants will also discover how AMWA membership can help you transition into medical writing

3. **Defining your elevator pitch (Rachel Sy)**
   Create a quick, punchy, and memorable oral pitch to describe your business and services offered and pressure-test it with a group of your peers.

   Learn how to:
   - Concisely describe your company and services to your potential clients
   - Increase your impact and 'stickiness' in a person’s memory by trying out and refining your pitch with a sympathetic crowd

4. **How to Attract More Clients on LinkedIn (Lori De Milto, Freelance writer and founder, The Mighty Marketer)**
   More clients are searching for freelancers on LinkedIn these days. But if you want to rank high in search results, you need 3 things:
   1. A client-focused profile
2. A large and relevant network
3. Engagement.

Learn how to:
- Develop a client-focused profile with the right keywords and a strong headline and summary
- Grow your network with the right connections
- Be active enough (engagement) to rank higher in search results.

Come prepared to share your LinkedIn challenges and successes

5. **Soft skills for freelances** *(Kelleen Flaherty)*
Your “hard” (technical) skills are 50% of what makes you successful. Your “soft” skills account for the other half, and are equally critical to your success—as you already know (I guarantee you that you already know). Soft skills include such things as personality, teamwork, flexibility, listening, critical thinking, problem solving, conflict-resolution, self-confidence, negotiation, leadership, ethics, and a host of other things we a) know whether or not we’re good at, and b) can readily recognize (or not) in others. Freelancing offers up some unique case studies in soft skills. This isn’t a round table, it’s group therapy. Come join us!

6. **Contract negotiation / Reading contracts: what to watch for, common clauses--their significance** *(Mark Bowlby)*
Negotiating a contract to cover a single or multiple projects need not be difficult as long as both perspectives (the client’s and the freelance’s) are taken into account. This roundtable will highlight the structure of a typical contract and discuss what freelances need to understand about how to negotiate their next contract. Learn how to:
- Review or draft a contract: using your template vs the client’s
- Facilitate the negotiating process
- Mitigate disagreements when they occur

Everyone has something that comes to mind when they hear the phrase "work-life balance." In this roundtable discussion we will touch on what comes to mind for you and discuss different strategies that can help you find this balance. We will discuss:
- Letting go of perfectionism
- The importance of "unplugging"
- Making quality time true quality time
• Exercise and meditation
• Modifying your workspace to promote healthy goals
• Setting boundaries and work hours

8. Examining Transferable Skillsets for Medical Writing (Darryl Z. L’Heureux)
Certain keywords appear in almost every job posting and relate to abstract skills such as communication, multitasking, teamwork, creativity, critical thinking, and leadership. These keywords are not a secret language, but rather transferable skills that enable you to do your job well. In this roundtable, we will break down transferable skills found in scientific writing and medical communication so you can:
• Identify different primary communication skills
• Explore problem solving and creativity found in our daily activities
• Discuss better time management and organization
• Explore leadership and teamwork opportunities in your projects

Concurrent Interactive Freelance Sessions 3:50 PM – 4:45 PM
Whether you are early in your career or a more experienced freelance, we have a session for you. Hear from companies who hire freelancers, and learn how to grow your business by attending *How Medical Communication Companies Choose Their Freelance or Contract Medical Writers* or the Freelance Jam Session led by experienced freelances.

Panel discussion: Insights on how medical communication companies choose their freelance or contract medical writers and editors.
Moderator: Katherine Molnar-Kimber, PhD

Panel members:
• Mark Bowlby, PhD, Synchrogenix, a Certara company
• Beverly Stanley, ELS, Director of Editorial Services, Vaniam Group
• Nathalie Turner, MS, ELS, Senior Scientific Director, Medscape

Ever wonder how medical communication and medical education companies choose which freelancer to hire for a project? What characteristics do they seek? Do the freelancers always have to have experience in that type of document or therapeutic field or disease? The panel will discuss the types of documents, approaches for finding potential quality freelancers, screening strategies, company’s expectations of freelancers, and more. Audience will also have the opportunity to ask general questions.
Freelance Jam Session
Moderator: Brian G. Bass, MWC®

When accomplished musicians jam, their combined talent, energy, and experience make a special kind of synergy. A similar kind of magic happens when seasoned freelances get together to discuss their thoughts, ideas, concerns, and challenges with peers of equal or greater experience. These rare gems of collegial conversation and commiseration happen spontaneously and usually unpredictably. (Often they involve a glass of wine.) Here’s your opportunity to make some local jam session freelance magic at the AMWA-DVC Freelance Workshop. This no-holds-barred session will provide a supportive space for freelances who have a minimum of 10 years of continuous and current freelance experience, to wrestle their demons and share their experiences. Whether you emerged from your experiences bloodied and bruised, valiant, or victorious, we all have stories to tell, and we can all learn from and teach each other. This session will be lightly structured to permit a free flow of discussion without getting stuck for too long on a single topic. Sorry, there won’t be any wine during the session.

Registration and Logistics

Register Online Now
Visit the [registration page](#) <<provide link>>

Registration Cost
We are pleased to offer conference registration that is unchanged from 2019!

AMWA Members $130
Non-members $150
Full-time Students $110 (must provide official ID to register)

The registration fee includes breakfast, lunch, and morning and afternoon beverages and snacks. **No refunds will be given for cancellations after Friday, March 6, 2020.**

Program Logistics

Location
Double Tree Suites by Hilton Hotel Philadelphia West, 640 Fountain Road, Plymouth Meeting, PA, 19462

Directions
Visit the hotel’s [website](#) for directions. The hotel is north of Plymouth Meeting Mall and interchange between the Blue Route (I-476) and the PA Turnpike (I-276)

Hotel Rooms
To make your hotel room reservation, please contact the [Double Tree Suites by Hilton](https://www.doubletree.com) Philadelphia West 640 Fountain Road, Plymouth Meeting, PA, 19462. Guest Reservations (866) 238-4218. AMWA-DVC did not reserve a block of rooms because we would have had to guarantee at least 80% occupancy. As of now, the online rate is 20% cheaper ($95) than the proposed room block rate. Thus, if interested in staying overnight, consider reserving your room soon.

**Friday Night Networking Dinner**

Join us for an informal networking dinner, to be held at a local restaurant on Friday, March 13, 2020. Each person will pay his/her own dinner and beverages. To sign up, email Nicole Walz at: nicolewalz@gmail.com and insert “AMWA-DVC Freelance Workshop Dinner” in the subject line. We will be in touch with details in early March.

**Questions?**

Contact hfosam@theedgemedicalwriting.com or kmolnarkimer297@hushmail.com with the subject line “Q AMWA-DVC Freelance Workshop”

**Biosketches**

**Beverly Stanley, ELS, Director of Editorial Services, Vaniam Group**

Beverly E. Stanley, ELS, is the editorial director for Vaniam Group LLC, an independent network of healthcare and scientific communications agencies, focusing on compounds in the oncology and hematology marketplace. Vaniam is a 100% virtual environment, truly a workplace of the future in the present, and provides a unique management experience. Beverly has 15 years of experience in medical communications and has worked successfully as a freelance consultant or full-time employee for various clients as a senior editor for publications and medical education, including Bristol-Myers Squibb, MRM McCann, and the FDA, and as a veterinary health writer for the American Kennel Club. She hired 16 freelance consultants for Vaniam in 2019 and is happy to share her assessment of what medical communications companies seek in quality freelance professionals.

**Brian G. Bass, MWC®, President, Bass Global, Inc.,** is an award-winning freelance medical writer. He is President of Bass Global, Inc., which was founded in 1989 and provides medical writing solutions in the areas of pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, devices, and diagnostics for healthcare professional, consumer, and business audiences in a wide range of therapeutic areas and media. Brian is also co-author of *The Accidental Medical Writer®* Series of books, resources, information, and inspiration for freelance medical writers. Brian is a Past President of AMWA, where he has also served on the Executive Committee as President, President-Elect, Administrator of the Annual Conference, in development and publicity capacities, and currently as Chair of the Communications and Marketing Committee and a member of the Certification Committee. He received AMWA’s 2017 Harold Swanberg Distinguished Service Award for his contribution to the field of medical...
communications. In addition, Brian has served as President of AMWA-DVC, and as the chapter’s Programming and Publicity chairs. He founded and chaired the AMWA-DVC Princeton Conference for 16 years, and is an avid speaker and presenter.

Darryl Z. L’Heureux, PhD, MSc, MS Pharm QARA, Senior Medical Writer, Bristol-Myers Squibb, is an active member of the medical writing community. He is the immediate Past President of AMWA-DVC and co-chairs the DIA Annual Meeting Planning Committee. Currently, he leads lung protocol development for Bristol-Myers Squibb and teaches courses in Scientific Writing in the Professional Science Master’s program at Temple University.

Helen Fosam, PhD, is a freelance medical writer and owner of The Edge Medical Writing, LLC, founded in 2013. Medical writing for medical education brings together Helen’s interest in the sciences, medicine, and communication. Helen applies her 18 years medical writing experience to help address key needs for content development, including well-written needs assessments, slides, abstracts, manuscripts, or conference reports. Helen’s reputation for professionalism and efficiency, with a commitment to deliver high quality work to strict deadline and budget, provides seamless extension to writing teams in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical communication industry sectors to meet looming deadlines. She is co-chairing the 2020 AMWA-DVC Freelance Workshop.

Jennifer Minarcik, MS, Jennifer Minarcik Biomedical Communications, LLC
Jennifer Minarcik, MS, is a biomedical communicator, artist, and social media enthusiast. After years of scientific research at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Jennifer began her freelance career in 2011. She specializes in writing about cutting-edge technologies used in early drug discovery models and works with medical communication companies to develop sales training and promotional materials. Jennifer has been a member of AMWA since 2011 and is currently the Delaware Valley Chapter Advisory Council Representative and Social Media Section Editor of the AMWA Journal. She is Past President of the Delaware Valley Chapter.

Katherine Molnar-Kimber, Ph.D., is an Independent scientific and medical writer and consultant. She began her career as a Scientist and pursued basic science, translational and medical research (20+ years in University and Pharmaceutical Industry, 50+ scientific articles). She utilizes her experience as a reviewer, speaker, award-winning scientist (best poster), and corresponding author to write or substantive edit research papers, reviews, grant proposals, and web pages on scientific and medical topics. She enjoys volunteering with AMWA as the Editor of the Delawriter and the President-Elect of the AMWA-DVC. She is the President of KMK Consulting Services of Kimnar Group LLC (Worcester, PA) and lives with her husband and dog. She is co-chairing the 2020 AMWA-DVC Freelance Workshop.

Kelleen (Kelly) Flaherty has been a professional medical writer for over 30 years, working in most major subareas (publications, CME, promotional, and regulatory writing), in both full-time and freelance—typically for agencies, but also directly for pharma. She has been teaching in the University of the Sciences graduate program in biomedical writing for over 20 years (presently as an adjunct, which, you can argue, is freelance). “Soft skills” is
one of her "things"; she has studied it for a good 10 years, giving presentations and roundtables at meetings (including DVC’s FW and Princeton conferences, and AMWA national) and publishing on it in AMWA Journal.

**Laura J. Ninger, ELS,** is a medical writer and editor with 30 years of experience in medical communications, including 25 years as an independent consultant. Laura provides writing and/or editing services on varied projects including abstracts, needs assessments, journal articles, patient education materials, slide decks, e-learning sales training modules, and other content in various therapeutic areas. She began her career at Elsevier in New York, started freelancing in 1994, and established Ninger Medical Communications, LLC, in 2007. In addition to her certification as an Editor in the Life Sciences (ELS), Laura holds 3 AMWA certificates and has presented at AMWA meetings on topics pertaining to freelance business practices.

**Lori De Milto, MJ,** is a freelance medical writer, and online teacher and coach. She helps clients engage patients, health consumers, healthcare professionals, and other audiences and teaches other freelancers how to get the clients they deserve. An AMWA fellow, Lori founded the annual AMWA-DVC Freelance Workshop in 2002 and has served in many positions for AMWA national and the Delaware Valley Chapter. She is the author of 7 Steps to High-Income Freelancing and host of The Mighty Marketer website and courses. Lori has 2 degrees in journalism from Temple University (BA and MJ).

**Mark Bowlby, PhD,** has over 24 years of experience in the clinical research and drug development industry. During those years, he held several writing roles, including in publications and regulatory writing. Mark is currently a Principal Regulatory Writer and Director of Global Submissions at Synchrogenix where he works with clients of all sizes. His background covers both sides of the contract negotiations process, namely that of the employer and of the freelance. This perspective will inform the discussion and allow the participants to understand the needs of both sides of their next contract negotiation. Mark is currently serving as President of AMWA-DVC.

**Melissa L. Bogen, ELS,** has been a full-time freelance editor since 1997. Her expertise is in editing, fact checking, and proofreading medical manuscripts, pharmaceutical sales training materials, and multimedia programs for healthcare professionals in a wide range of therapeutic areas. Melissa has in-depth knowledge of AMA style, FDA guidelines, & editorial production processes. Since 2006, she has regularly presented at local and national AMWA conferences on the scope of medical editing, the differences between editing and proofreading, and Microsoft Word Tips and Tricks.

**Nathalie Turner, MS, ELS** has more than 2 decades of experience in the medical education/communications arenas in various positions that include writing, editing, and directing, in both full-time and freelance capacities. Currently, she is a senior grant developer at Medscape Education, the leader in continuing medical education for medical professionals, marking 13 years with Medscape in 2020. In addition to grant writing at Medscape, Nathalie recruits, onboards, and trains freelance grant writers for Medscape. Nathalie is an active member of the Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health
Professions and the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA), the latter of which she has been a member for more than 20 years. Nathalie is published in the AMWA Journal and has given multiple workshops on test question writing and needs assessment writing. Nathalie has a Master of Science in biomedical writing from the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia and is a certified Editor in the Life Sciences from the Board of Editors in the Life Sciences. She also holds AMWA Core and Advanced certificates.

**Rachel Sy** spends her days writing for pharmaceutical companies and her nights reimagining data visualizations for her freelance clients. She has written content for biotech investment funds, medical device companies, and - of course - the ubiquitous pharmaceutical companies. Her biggest strength (and weakness) is being honest and speaking her mind, sometimes to a fault. Her direct approach to communication in all forms will help you put your best words forward!

**Ruwaida Vakil, MSc,** is a consultant, speaker, and medical writer with expertise in medical communications and CME. For the past 17 years, she has been designing and developing a wide range of educational programs for healthcare professionals. Ruwaida completed her MSc in Immunology at the University of Toronto and the Ontario Cancer Institute. She is has served as the Secretary and the Freelance Workshop Chair for AMWA-DVC. She has presented at the conferences of AMWA and the Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions (ACEHP). She co-authored an award-winning poster on Best Practices for Writing CME Needs Assessments. The poster received the People’s Choice award from the ACEHP in 2016. She has also co-authored an AMWA training guide on writing CME needs assessments and has presented in-person and virtually to global publication leaders in the pharmaceutical industry.

**AMWA-DVC also greatly appreciates the time and efforts of the Freelance Workshop organizers and volunteers:**

**Co-Chairs:**
Helen Fosam  
Kathy Molnar-Kimber

**Program Committee**
Helen Fosam (chair)  
Brian Bass  
Jen Minarcik  
Kathy Molnar-Kimber  
Laura Ninger  
Rachel Sy  
Nicole Walz  
Ruwaida Vakil

**Mar. 13th AMWA-DVC Dinner Organizer**
Nicole Walz

**Registration desk onsite**
Jacquie Mahon